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The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

JUNE 2000

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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

JUNE 2000

There is just one way to bring up a child in the way he should go'and that is to travel that way yourself.
(Abraham Lincoln)

Example is always more efficacious than precept. *(Samuel Johnson)*

Few things are harder to put up with than the annoyance of a good example. *(Mark Twain)*

Example is *not* the main thing in influencing others - it is the *only* thing. *(Albert Schweitzer)*

The tree is made manifest by its fruit; so they who profess themselves to be christians are known by what they do. For christianity is not the work of an outward profession; but shows itself in the power of faith, if a man be found faithful unto the end. It is better for a man to hold his peace, and be; than to say he is a christian and not be. *(St. Ignatius of Antioch)*

I knew a miller who went from his work, his clothes covered with flour, to the post office, and edged his way through the crowd. He left his mark on every one he touched. As christians we should leave a mark for Christ on every one with whom we come in contact. *(H.B. Gibbud)*

Education is a continuum. It happens from the womb to the tomb. Every human possesses the precious potential which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care. *(W.A.F. Hopper)*

In the nursery the children were shouting and making a din. The teacher went in and asked what they were quarrelling about. 'We're not quarrelling,' said the eldest, 'we're just playing Mummy and Daddy'.

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JUNE 2000

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Teaching Ministry of the Church

Sometime ago there was an informal conversation among a group of people which consisted of bishops, a retired Moderator and some other friends and in this august company I found myself too. The lively and animated conversation touched on various subjects and finally veered round to church and faith. A retired bishop shared his knowledge, wisdom and experience. He said once a congregation member came to him and was heatedly arguing about satan and the powers of darkness and he had to gently draw his attention to the fact that there was no mention of satan at all in the creation story which was a revelation for me too. He even went to the extent of saying there was no satan at all. Man when he misused his free will creates a situation in which he finds himself in a contending position with an entity that takes him away from the fellowship he can have with God, his creator and the evil that man encounters in this world is mostly from within himself and not outside!

He also touched upon the problems faced by the pastors at the grass root level where the congregation is enticed and misled by people belonging to various groups, sects and persuasion into wrong views on baptism and speaking in tongues. He made it clear that this was the consequence of lack of clear understanding of God's grace and some people take advantage of the situation and mislead the gullible among our congregation members. In this context he said that both the bishops and the pastors shared a heavy responsibility as teachers of the church's standing on various issues and doctrines. 'It is because we have failed the congregations, others take advantage of the situation and as Milton put it in his Lycidas '*The hungry sheep look up and are not fed, And swollen with wind and the rank mist they draw, Rot inwardly and foul contagion spread,*' he said. It is time pastors and bishops realized their responsibilities as preachers, teachers and healers and offered a holistic ministry so that God's mission may effectively be accomplished through the Church.

Eucharist and Women Celebrants

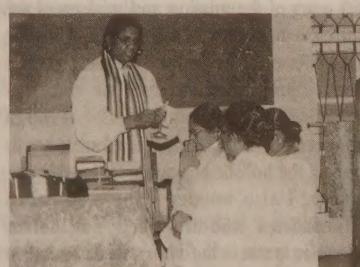
Sometime back I was attending a get-together of a diocesan pastors' wives as a communication resource person and as it usually happens in meetings like this, a communion service was planned on the last day of the meet. This get-together was held in a catholic retreat centre and early in the morning I found myself seated with the congregation that celebrated the eucharist. On the dais which was converted into an *ad hoc* altar for the celebration of the eucharist were clergy all in their cassocks and the ceremonial vestments with one obvious and glaring difference. All the clergy were women with not one man in their midst and that made me think and introspect!

I was glad that such a thing was happening at all in the first place and that too within the campus of a catholic retreat centre which even a decade or so ago would have been unthinkable! Ecumenism has been making strident steps and that is a welcome sign that augurs well for the

A View from the Pew

visible unity that we all seek to achieve among the separated brethren.

At the same time it is also a well-known fact that it is the table of the Lord where these separated brethren find themselves most separated! Even to this day the catholic church holds its own distinct view of ordination to priesthood which is that priesthood is the preserve of only men and not women! There is no sign of the church's hierarchy ever relenting on this issue even though the church would emphatically affirm the equality of sexes.



The equality of men and women has been taken into the altar too among the protestant churches and the CSI is a pio-

neer in this direction even though there seems to be some lingering reservation about it in one or two dioceses. As one among the congregation I found debating within myself if I had any intellectual and spiritual reservation about this last of the male bastion being trespassed into by women. As the eucharist was being celebrated this theological debate raged fiercely within myself and in my mind I was marshalling one argument after another to see if I had any intellectual reservation at all about it. The *Imago Dei* of the creation story affirming an inextricable blending of male and female components into it settled the issue for me in favour of women and when the celebration was over I left the hall a much relieved man.

Christians Attacked

Once again there have been bomb blasts in four different churches in three different states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Goa in early June. The timing is intriguing. All these blasts have occurred more or less on the same time on the same day though at different places spread over long distances. It is clear that they have been meticulously planned and executed by an outfit which obviously enjoys the patronage of the powers that be. The difference this time is that the government did not trot out its usual alibi of this being a law and order problem created by anti-social elements who were out to grab and loot but the sinister handiwork of the ISI which has spread its tentacles all over the country. Even assuming that it is the ISI which is behind all these attacks, is not the government to blame for giving such terrorist outfits, a handle by playing soft on the Sangh Pariwar who were all the time busy promoting hatred through their hate campaign against christians? And if it was the ISI then why is it that no investigation has been made so far and no suspect has been arrested? And here is the news now that even the graveyard has not been spared! In Rajamundry many graves have been dug and the crosses destroyed! The objective is clear: they want to intimidate christians and prevent them from carrying on their ministry of upliftment, development and liberation among the down-trodden and the oppressed.

Along with the whole church I deeply feel for the martyrdom of Brother George Kuzhikandam who was bludgeoned to death in Mathura; within days his assistant was also killed thus getting rid of the only eyewitness from the scene. It is a matter of concern to note that of late there has been a series of assaults on christians particularly on the priests and nuns with the blasting of christian places of worship. We may recall that the Australian Missionary Graham Staines and his two sons were burnt to death on Jan 23, 1999. This terror against christian church has spread to other states of Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. The readers are aware of a series of bomb blasts in Karnataka, Goa and Andhra Pradesh. The bombs that went off in churches in Vasco (Goa), Wadi (Karnataka), Ongole and Tadepalligudem (Andhra Pradesh) portray a systematic strategy of scaring the christian communities. Further bombs were hurled in two places at Machilipatnam (May 21, 2000) and at Vicarabad which not only injured several people during the time of worship but also has the potential to create a wedge of suspicion between hindus and christians who have been coexisting peacefully for ages.

In fact I am still convinced that the friendship between the majority of the hindus and the mainline christian church continues to be strong. The recent attacks have sent a shock wave because of the message of intimidation.

Added to this, crosses on 30 graves were destroyed in a christian cemetery in Rajamundry in Andhra Pradesh and this is yet another act of insanity intended to terrorise and put fear into the hearts of christians. Now and then christians are told they are foreigners and they should get out! Where can they go? The blind fanatics are unable to understand that whether a hindu, christian or a muslim, a buddhist or a Jain, all belong to this land by virtue of their birth, their origin and their roots in this soil and culture.

Mr. Vajpayee our hon'ble prime minister in the context of remembering the bitter experience of emergency period says, "a nation can be independent. The moot point is, are its people free? 25 years ago, on this day, we were robbed of this freedom; freedom to express our views; freedom to charter our course; freedom to cherish our independence. We in India today, more than ever before, can stand up, hold our heads high and enjoy our independence freely." Bravo! Great words! With all my respects to the PM, what kind of independence with which one

holds his head high? Is it by way of killing the priests of other religions, raping the minority women belonging to a particular religion, blasting and demolishing the places of worship of the minority religions which are monuments of this land? Is it with this pride we cherish our freedom which we are reminded we were robbed of during the emergency? The most shocking feature in this land of independence is that the present government allows the independent armies to get trained in places like Ayodhya and

world that we are regressing. I appeal to all specially the youngsters to rediscover the essence of the cross which is the continuing sign of hope in hostile contexts like this.

Meanwhile the Moderator and I participated in the CCA General Assembly in Indonesia. The theme was *A Time for Life in Fullness for All*. The unique experience was for us to witness a very deep and profound faith of the christians. It is again a similar experience where the

christian church has been suffering in the hands of the majority muslims. It is in this context we begin to recognise that the church in different times in history has experienced trauma and tribulation over centuries in various parts of the world. Yet the church continued to grow and strike deeper roots ultimately manifesting her unshakable faith in the resurrected Lord whose kingdom is eternal.

I also participated in the General Synod of the RCA held at the Hofstra University, New York. Particularly this participation of

mine helped to see a renewal of the relationship between the Church of South India and the Reformed Church in America. The RCA, Presbyterian Church in US and the Episcopal Church in America have jointly agreed to create an active partnership between some of their congregations and the dioceses of Tiruchirapalli-Thanjavur, Dornakal, Rayalaseema and Vellore. I have no doubt whatsoever that this cooperation would be a further demonstration of the visible unity in Christ that we all seek to manifest in our lives.



Rev. Dyvasirvadam with Dr. Emilio Castro, former Gen. Secretary of the WCC

Varanasi - (*Hindustan Times* 26 June 2000). Can this Government explain the definition of secularism?

It is unfortunate to hear some responsible people saying that christians are dangerous and they are a greater evil than Muslims because they are an unknown evil and that their organisation was ready to fight wherever the church institutions were active. (*Deccan Herald*, June 25) However the church in India has entered into a new phase in her life and witness. In this connection I appeal to all the christian friends to exercise forbearance to maintain harmony in spite of a few fundamentalists causing harm and damage to the church while majority of the hindu friends have been generous and friendly to the church. It is unfortunate that 200 years of the mission and ministry of the church in the context of education and healing and upliftment of the deprived are being reduced to mere proselytization. Even the vision for higher echelons of progress through advancement in the IT and related areas has its roots in the holistic education initiated by the church. I also wonder if these so called 'missionaries' who are killed, not Indians belonging to one or the other state of the nation adopting a local situation to empower the marginalised. As we boast of entering into the third millennium with ultra technological advancements, a few barbaric incidents like this should not give the impression to the outside



The Moderator and the General Secretary at the inaugural function of the CCA

At the wake of these international coming together of christians our prayer must be that it's manifestations be seen in our local coming together transcending barriers of creed and confessions. I hope and pray that the Lord would guide His Church towards this direction.

G. Dyvasirvadam

RETHINKING OF THE EDUCATION MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH

Prof. W.A.E Hopper M.Sc., M.Ed., Ph.D., AIE (Lond.), Cert. Sc.Edn.(Ohio) *

Introduction

Education is a continuum. It happens from the womb to the tomb. Every human possesses the precious potential which needs to be cherished, nurtured and developed with tenderness and care through appropriate and relevant Education Curriculum and Evaluation programmes.

The CSI Synod Council for Education organised a two-day Consultation on the new National Policy of Education on 18th and 19th November, 1985 to study the policy perspective document: "Challenge of Education". The response of the CSI was sent to Shri Rajiv Gandhi, the then Prime-Minister of India. The Church affirmed the basic thrust of the document with reference to Education for HRD. The Church suggested that the focus for HRD should be the downtrodden and marginalised communities with whom the Church has been working for centuries.

The National Policy of Education (NPE) was placed in our Parliament in 1986 and the Programme of Action (POA) document was also released. Unfortunately, all of a sudden, we lost our leader Shri Rajiv Gandhi who was instrumental in formulating the new policy of education with a new national thrust for HRD.

1.0 Education towards Human Resource Development (HRD)

Our Lord Jesus Christ was concerned with the holistic development of people as recorded in the Bible (Luke 19:2; John 4:7; Luke 18:15, 16). Jesus took special interest in the development of his chosen disciples, Thomas (John 20:29), Peter (John 21:15-19) and Paul (Acts 26:19). Jesus never condemned any one. Jesus found out the human potential in the people and gave opportunities so that they may develop themselves.

God out of His love and grace created the Humans in His own image (Gen.1:26, 27). He created them as male and female according to the divine plan. The Woman and the Man were endowed with equal human potential (2.56 kg bio-mass of brain tissue) in the form of the living human brain. A good deal of research is being done on the human brain to probe into its functioning as a living human-computer. We humans are unable to comprehend the wisdom of God and the Power of God in this aspect of creation. The living human computer was used by Women and Men to produce a non-living human-made computer to do a large number of operations at tremendous speed to help in the human welfare. The breath-taking revolution in electronics and technology together had made it possible to design and develop computers for different jobs.

Recent researches on human-learning have unfolded the hierarchical levels of cognitive learning that could take place in the human computer. The human brain has not only the capacity to store information (both semantic and visual) but also to process it and generate creative ideas, designs and processes with the help of a cluster of living neurons at the molecular and cellular levels. Are our Christian educators aware of this immense human capacity given to us as a free gift by God Himself to enable us to attain maximum levels of learning and achievements?

Benjamin S. Bloom had developed a conceptual model in the form of a Taxonomy of Educational Objectives in the cognitive domain by observing learning taking place among the students in schools and colleges in the developed and developing countries in the 1950s. Many doctoral and post-doctoral studies have been done on the above cognitive domain educational taxonomy for the past 50 years. It is gratifying to note that the taxonomy has been utilized in the preparation of innovative curriculum and evaluation materials for schools, arts and science degree colleges and professional colleges and institutes.

Our Church is managing a large number of primary schools, secondary and higher secondary schools, degree colleges, professional colleges and institutes for the benefit of learners drawn from different faiths and socio-economic levels. Preference is given for admitting students from the poorest of the poor. It is indeed a great challenge for the christian educational institutions to provide for excellence in education leading to maximizing the human potential resulting in the formation of human resource development (HRD) for nation building.

The CSI Synod together with the diocese and heads of educational institutions ought to organize seminars and workshops on: "Education for Human Resource Development" for their teachers to sensitize and equip them to plan for HRD to take place in their learners from LKG onwards.

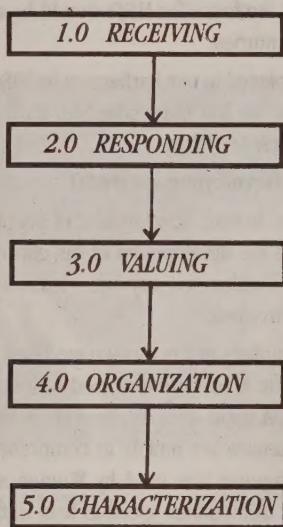
2.0 Education towards formation of Human Values

he Gospels and Epistles in the New Testament of the Bible contain a large number of passages which are value-based. For example, the Sermon on the Mount as recorded in Matt. 5 to 7, the story of the Cross of Christ as narrated in all the Gospels, Romans 8 and Philippians 2 could be analyzed in terms of value-based statements. The focus in the Bible is with reference to the vision and mission towards the formation of a new community with manifestations of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation. That community would be formed as a result of caring, sharing and serving relationships among its partners.

* Development Education consultant, Chennai

Very interestingly one of the students of Bloom by name Krathwohl developed and published the taxonomy of educational objectives in the affective domain. I had used both the cognitive domain and affective domain taxonomies working with school teachers and with faculties of the Arts and Science degree colleges, theological degree colleges affiliated to Serampore University and medical colleges. The University Grants Commission(UGC) and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) have utilized the above taxonomies for development of curriculum and evaluation materials by their constituent colleges and schools. A large number of christian colleges which are members of the All India Association of Christian Higher Education (AIACHE) have been exposed many times to the above conceptual models.

According to Krathwohl, et al., value formation happened in the humans through the following five hierarchical levels :



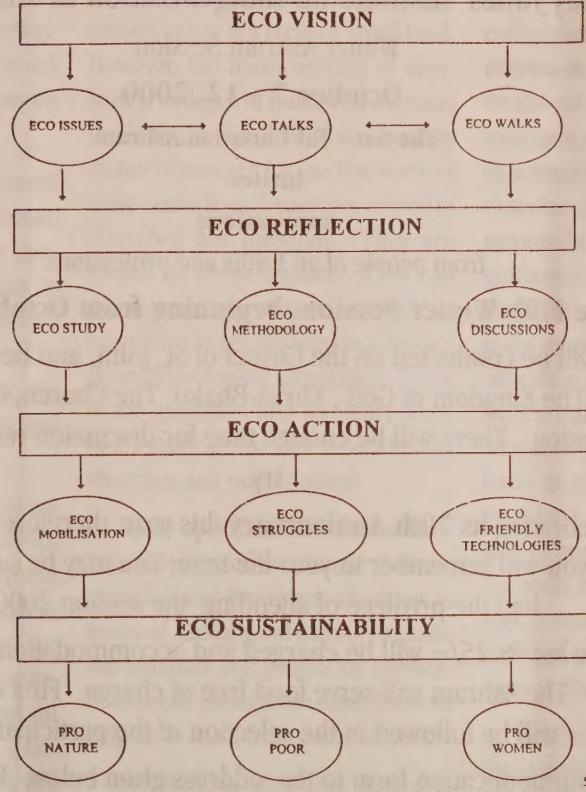
Each of the above level has sub-divisions. For example 3.0 is divided into three sub-levels 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 which represent acceptance of a value, preference for a value and commitment to a value respectively.

The commonly used terms, such as, interests, attitudes, appreciations and adjustments are subsumed in the affective domain taxonomy of Krathwohl.

The Life and Mission of Jesus on Earth could be beautifully analyzed in the light of the affective domain taxonomy. Needless to mention that Jesus had attained the highest level of value development in "characterization" (at 5.0 level) wherein holiness and compassion are integrated to form a unique combine as a perfect human to be a model for all his disciples. "Christ-likeness" therefore has become an objective for christian value education.

The challenge before the CSI Synod is to find out ways and means of integrating value education with our christian educational institutions themselves so that dioceses may consider adapting or adopting the feasible models in their own educational institutions from the nursery school level to the post graduate and professional college level. School level and college level educators ought to be given in-depth training to develop instructional Modules on selected concepts in the secular subjects of study focussing on human values. With the advent of eco-theology, eco-based values should be developed through environment friendly curricula and evaluation strategies.

A conceptual model is presented below for organizing eco-awareness educational programmes in christian schools and colleges towards greening the minds of both the teachers and learners.



3.0 Education towards development of Life Oriented Skills (LOE)

Elizabeth Simpson has published the taxonomy of educational objectives in the Psychomotor domain. There are seven hierarchical levels in this taxonomy. It starts with *Perception* and goes through *Set*, *Guided Response*, *Mechanism*, *Complex Overt Response*, *Adaptations* and *peaks at Origination*. It is interesting to observe that creativity occupies the highest rung in the cognitive ladder, affective ladder and psychomotor ladder of human development.

The Bible in its very first book Genesis indicates God himself as the gardener who created a lovely eco garden named as garden of Eden. There was perfect peace and harmony prevailing in the garden between the living and non-living and thereby evolved a balanced eco-system. God demonstrated farm skills (psychomotor skills of course). Adam and Eve ought to have acquired a variety of Agriculture and Horticulture related psychomotor skills. At chapter 6 of the book of Genesis, Noah and his family together built a big boat popularly called Noah's Ark according to predetermined specifications outlined by God himself. That is the display of psychomotor skills at the creativity level. It was an original piece of sophisticated work.

In the other books of the Bible, mention is made of artisans who did exemplary works of art. Paul was a specialist in making tents. All the disciples of Jesus were good at making nets, boats and catching fish. All the above actions involved attainment of psychomotor skills. The skills no doubt were learnt at that time in carpentry shops as Jesus did or perhaps through non-formal and informal educational modes as community based programmes.

The key concept today is IT or ICT. IT is Information Technology. ICT is Information and Communication Technology. Already rapid developmental strides have been accomplished in the IT and ICT sectors in the world. The Green Paper on School Education presented in the British Parliament in December 1998 talks about the impact of ICT on Teaching and Learning at the school level itself in the beginning of the year 2000 (para No. 152 at page 59) to enable all British children to be equipped with ICT skills for future life. The NCERT, New Delhi has released in January 2000 a discussion document of 125 pages on the National Curriculum Framework for School Education. A strong suggestion is made about integrating ICT with School Education with reference to administration, teaching and learning (para No. 1.2.5 at page 11).

Conclusion

I do hope the Synod and the 21 dioceses together would take up some of the crucial areas for reflection to strengthen our educational institutions to adopt and adapt some of the recent innovations in the Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor areas of Human Development with the focus on the marginalised and downtrodden communities.

Maharshi E. Stanley Jones' Institute on Indigenization in Mission and Evangelism

Winter Ashram Session

October 7 - 12, 2000

The Sat - Tal Christian Ashram

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applications

from people of all Faiths and professions

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The major study will be conducted on the Gospel of St. John, and besides this, there will be other topics e.g., 'The Kingdom of God', Khrist-Bhakti, The Church, Christian Mysticism and Yoga and Indigenization. There will be enough time for discussion relating to faith and ministry.

The Ashram is celebrating its **70th Anniversary** this year; therefore the Winter Ashram will be an event which you will remember in your life time; You may be saying to yourself that you had the privilege of attending the session 2000.

Towards registration fee Rs.25/= will be charged and accommodation charges will be Rs.25/= per day, per head. The Ashram will serve food free of charge. First come, first served policy will be followed in the selection of the participants.

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Tel (05942) - 47058.

The South India Churchman and the members of the Church of South India congratulate the General Secretary **Rev.G.Dyvasirvadam** on his election to the General Committee of the *Christian Conference of Asia* in its recent General Assembly at Indonesia. They also welcome him on his return from USA where he attended the General Synod of the Reformed Church of America.



Rev.Dyvasirvadam is seen with CSI partners in Mission. (from left to right) Martin Weiss, Roger Schrock(RCA), Cannon Patrick Mauni and Winston Cheng(Episcopal Church, USA)

Theological Education in the 21st Century

Dr.Jesudason Jeyaraj*

The present scenario of theological education in India is very much encouraging. The following reasons could be stated:

i) We have developed advanced level theological education; as a result, our students can complete their doctoral degrees in India. Scholars to guide researchers, library resources and scholarship funds have been developed over the years to provide quality education in our seminaries and colleges.

ii) Indian seminaries are drawing students from neighbouring countries like SriLanka, Nepal, Bangladesh and Myanmar, where theological education is not that much developed either due to political or ecclesiastical reasons. Indian seminaries have risen to extend their help to the churches and theological institutions in Asia. India will become an important centre of theological training in Asia in 2000 A.D.

iii) Indian theological education gives importance to pietism, ecumenism, evangelization, church planting and liberation. Indigenization of christianity was taken seriously soon after Independence and efforts were taken to create an indigenized form of liturgy, worship and theology in Indian philosophical categories, impart theological education in regional languages, produce books and course materials in vernacular, etc. Contextual theologies like liberation, dalit, tribal, feminist and eco are developing.

iv) Churches particularly belonging to charismatic movements who once questioned the necessity of theological education have now acknowledged its importance and started establishing their own seminaries and in-

stitutes either at a large or small level. However, the mushrooming of theological colleges in India with overseas funds in the last decade is a serious matter of concern for us. For, some of these seminaries are neither related to churches nor missions. They are owned by some families. They call themselves trans-denominational but not willing to get affiliated to a Senate/Board/Theological Association. Some of the graduates find no future since their certificates are not recognized by churches and organizations.

v) Co-operation between the theological institutions of Roman Catholic churches and Protestant churches in terms of exchange of faculty, organizing seminars and producing publications is increasing these days. This can help us to learn from each other.

vi) Students who have studied in evangelical seminaries are accepted for higher studies in ecumenical seminaries. Some of the students trained in ecumenical seminaries are accepted as teachers in evangelical seminaries and *vice versa*. This is a notable change in the Indian theological education. The division between evangelicals and ecumenicals can be narrowed down further if SSC and ATA work closer on certain programmes and projects.

Although we notice progress in theological education in India, we also hear a lot of complaints from bishops, presidents, senior pastors and laity about the declining commitment of theologically trained students, lack of vision for people, shallow understanding of the Scripture and society, misuse of power and authority, moral lapses and negligence in the stewardship of money. Should we blame the

college that trained such ministers and the system of education given to them? Or should we blame the structure and treatment of the Church/Organization that employed them? Leaders of the churches and organizations are partly responsible for not providing proper guidance and encouragement and shaping their ministers to be effective in the ministry. I believe, the system of education and the training of the colleges are also partly responsible in the formation of christian ministers. This leads us to raise questions such as - what kind of education is more suitable to our context? What should be the goals and objectives of our theological training? What should be the centre of our training - Student or Society or Church?

Another issue raised quite often in the present context is the theological *thrust or focus* of the seminaries. Should all the seminaries agree and promote only one theology suited to the policies and doctrinal stand of their management? Theologies are pluralistic. But what should be the common theological thrust of the seminaries? Liberation theology which is biblical as well as contextual should be the main thrust of the seminaries. Seminaries are not just educational institutions but also service agencies in our society. They cannot simply teach subjects and close their eyes to the evils in our society. Teaching and involvement should go hand in hand in all our educational institutions including secular schools, colleges and universities. However, many church leaders question this view and insist that seminaries should produce only "poojaris" to conduct worship and rituals. There is a lack of understanding of the biblical concept of a shepherd. Seminaries, therefore,

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are in constant struggle with their churches to promote the kind of training churches expect or churches need today.

Models and Objectives

Different models of theological education such as monastery, university, seminary and discipleship centre, etc., have been developed over the years. Seminary or Bible College model is more popular in different parts of the world. Trained in a seminary and honoured with a degree or diploma are liked by many. It gives them recognition and religious authority. This was the situation even in the period of Jesus. Scholarly Rabbinic schools were offering theological training on Torah, Prophets and Writings. Students like Paul preferred the scholar Gamaliel. Some Pharisees and Sadducees were trained in such Rabbinic schools. Scribes were given special training in writing and copying the Torah. When Jesus started preaching, teaching and giving radical interpretation of the Scripture, the Pharisees and Sadducees questioned his authority to preach and teach. They did not respect him or accept his interpretation since Jesus did not study in a Rabbinic school (Jn.7) Jesus noticed the fallacies of formally structured training, professionalism of the Pharisees and Sadducees helped them to show as the only recognized authority over the Scripture and to force their interpretation on the people. But Jesus created an alternative model of training - i.e., the Discipleship Training (Guru-Shishya model). He could have established a seminary with a campus either on the sea-shore of Galilee or by the riverside of Jordan or in the city of Jerusalem. He preferred discipleship Training model to suit the goal and objectives. He knew very well that goals and infra-structure are inter-related. His model did not require a big infra-

structure and continuous financial support. He made the training contextual and people-oriented rather than authoritarian and oppressive of people. His mission is liberative. He trained the disciples to live and die for the Gospel of forgiveness, liberation and welfare. He used houses, seashores, street, pools, gardens, hills and mountains, temple and synagogues as the centres for his training. Jesus avoided the danger of falling into the trap of constant fund raising and protecting the buildings and structures. He carefully selected the objectives, the model and programmes to build-up the disciples in personal, theological and ministerial formations to exercise their faith and practice what they learned. He used various methods of testing their performance in the context. A very important lesson we need to learn from the ministry of Jesus is that goals, objectives, programmes, curriculum and infra-structure are carefully selected and inter-linked and determined the nature of training.

Should we say only the discipleship model is the best and to be followed? Should we avoid all the other models of theological training? No. Each model has its own merits and demerits. We cannot ignore the historical and theological reasons which necessitated the development of various models over the years. India is a vast country with different cultures and church traditions. No one can claim the monopoly of one type of theological education for the whole of the country. Senate of Serampore as an 'affiliating agency' is playing an important role in giving highly academic theological education in our country. Senate of Serampore is even aiming high to achieve the status of Christian university in India. ATA as an 'accrediting body' is also playing a valuable role in our country particularly evalu-

ating some seminaries and requiring them to offer quality and contextual training. While we recognize such a pluralism of affiliating and accrediting agencies for India, we need to emphasize one main theological thrust of liberation in our context. We need various models of training but they should contribute for the transformation of the ministers and society.

Models integrating objectives, programmes and evaluation methods alone cannot make the trainees successful and effective in the ministry. We have a number of cases who were trained in such institutions and have miserably failed in the ministry and family life. Therefore another important dimension in training is the *call, vision and continuous commitment of the individual*. Identifying and selecting only such candidates without favouritism and nepotism is an important responsibility of the churches. Seminaries too should provide an atmosphere for ministerial candidates in training to grow in their vision and commitment.

Context and Curriculum

Each training is focussed on a context. Context of India is pluralistic-religiously, politically and socio-economically. In addition to major religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, we have a number of minor religions. People of different faiths live side by side and usually get along well. But we notice tensions and violence between religious communities are increasing in recent years. Some are over-emphasizing the supremacy of their religions over other religions and try to demolish the worshipping centres of others and suppress their culture and customs. Conversion and anti-conversion efforts of some religions spark violence and vengeance. Religious communities live in constant

suspicion. What should be our theological training to our religious pluralism? Should we insist only on evangelism and ignore inter-religious dialogue? Should our curriculum include these issues and enable the students to work for peace and harmony or not? How do we train our students to appreciate culture, uphold indigenization and at the same time not to contradict the Gospel?

Socio-economic dimension of our context is also pluralistic because Indian society is a class as well as caste oriented. 3-5% of the population are the richest and control the business and politics of our nation. More than 50% of the people live below the poverty line not able to have their daily bread. Out of 40-45% of the middle class, a large segment are employed in the private and unorganized sectors, struggling to meet the cost of living with their poor salary. A small section of the middle class are salaried people, employed in the Government and trying to go up the ladder by any means. Caste system has divided our society and created the evils of untouchability, nepotism and communal violence. Tribals and dalits demand justice and equality. *Ranvir Sena* of the landlords kill the poor dalits mercilessly. RSS, VHP and Bajrang Dal try to impose Brahminical customs and Sanskritization on others. Caste politics in the appointments or elections in the churches and dioceses is becoming unavoidable and ruin the unity of the christians. What sort of courses and practicals should be offered to make our theological training more meaningful to our nation? We need a paradigm shift from "*Church focussed curriculum*" to "*Society focussed curriculum*".

Curriculum

Curriculum which includes the list of subjects, detailed course outline

with requirements of reading, assignments and evaluation criteria cannot be formulated theoretically. It should be related to our context, address the issues and bring out solutions. Otherwise curriculum written without taking the context into consideration is useless and irrelevant. Curriculum is not just to teach knowledge and issue certificates but to impart knowledge on the context, develop the skill of analysis and identify the problems, challenge the teacher and students to get involved in society and achieve some results.

i) One major problem with many of us is to think of theological training is only to work in the churches. We have a limited understanding of God's mission. We are satisfied with producing 'pujaris' to conduct lively worship, pray and counsel the congregations and plant churches. We need to raise the important question - *what is the mission of the church?* Should the church be satisfied with worship services, prayer meetings, orphanages and evangelistic campaigns? Is she not called to establish justice, welfare and peace? Is she not the agent in promoting the kingdom values in our society? Churches exist for society. They are the salt and light to the world. Churches without social focus lose their relevance. Society without the Gospel of the kingdom is directionless.

When the disciples of Jesus planted churches, they had a clear vision and mission of the churches. They are to challenge the socio-political injustice, bring equality and to function as a model community in the midst of the corrupt and divided world. Churches were planted to live and function for the oppressed and the powerless. The epistles of Paul, Peter and James reveal their expectations on the part of the churches planted by them. Transforming the local context

is the purpose of education. Theological training is to mobilize the ministers and congregations to witness their faith in proclamation and actions in the society.

ii) Another problem is to follow the western curriculum which is written for the western context. Some of our leaders have more trust in western writers than in our own writers and educationists. Not only the course outline and books but also illustrations and case studies taken from the context of Chicago, Liverpool and Berlin mentioned in the books are used. Quite often neither the teacher who follows the syllabus has visited such context nor students understand the teaching meaningfully. On the other hand, western curriculum can promote interest in students to migrate to the west.

iii) The gap between the "Course Writer" and "Course Teacher" is another problem. The writer of the syllabus should have experience in the ministry and continuous contact with the people at the grass-root. Otherwise what the person writes would be theoretical. The writer should spell out clearly the general goals, specific objectives, expectations and requirements in the syllabus. The present syllabus followed by many seminaries do not have such details. For some courses, seminaries do not have syllabus at all and teachers teach such courses according to their whims and fancies and give marks. This is like a boat without a sail and rudder. Unless the syllabus is produced like a Study Guide with all details, it is difficult for the teacher who is not the course writer to understand the objectives and achieve the results in teaching. But more than such details, the direct involvement of the teacher in the local church and society helps the teacher to understand the syllabus, develop the

teaching skill to relate the syllabus to context and bring out personal, theological and ministerial formation in the student.

iv) Non-involvement of women in writing the syllabus and teaching the courses to bring feminist perspectives is so obvious in many seminaries. Some seminaries do not have a single woman teacher in their faculty list. Theological education is generally dominated by men. Extra care and deliberate effort should be taken to incorporate the dimension of women, children and environment in our theological curriculum.

Curriculum needs periodic revisions and modification. Teaching is relating the curriculum to the context and context to the curriculum. It is a two way traffic. By relating the context to the curriculum, we constantly shape the syllabi. By applying the syllabi through our teaching to the context, we try to transform our society. This two way traffic could become successful only when staff and students have involvement in our pluralistic context.

Involvement, Teaching and Evaluation

Teaching in a theological college is preferred by many graduates rather than pastoral ministry or missionary work or social service. Students look at the teachers in theological colleges and their life style and like to lead such a life after their graduation. We are the role models of our students. Our teaching is not a profession like in the secular colleges but a ministry with involvement. Only by involving in our society, we can make our teaching meaningful and mobilize our students to do the ministry with burden and concern. Why should we involve in local churches and socio-political and economic problems of our people?

i) Our teaching and training is not

just to offer degrees but to serve the people.

ii) Involvement helps us to re-read the Bible with particular perspectives and re-interpret the text and make it relevant to the problems faced by the people.

iii) Teachers gain experience with the people and blend their experience in teaching the subjects, drawing examples and illustrations from the insights gained out of involvement. Our teaching becomes more authentic because of real experience. Students respect our teaching and get challenged. Otherwise students know that the teacher is having only theoretical knowledge and hesitate to put their confidence in what he/she teaches.

iv) Involvement in the local community challenges not only our intellectual thinking, skill of theological reflections but also our own spirituality. Many theological teachers and pastors are not dynamic and do not contribute anything new in teaching or preaching. They are tired of ministry and become a burden to the institutions because of saturation in their spirituality.

v) Involvement wins the confidence of the local community and enhances credibility for our mission. Unnecessary gossiping and dirty politics in administration are due to lack of involvement in society. The more the involvement and suffering for the people, less the time for gossip and politics in our churches and institutions.

vi) Involvement challenges our life style. Many of us are afraid that we cannot have comfort, accumulate wealth, use the power and authority as we like if we involve and identify with the poor. We are not prepared to lose and become powerless. They repeatedly raise various questions about God and the role of churches. Such theo-

logical questions challenge our syllabus, teaching methods, programmes, practical work, infra-structure and force us to find a theological and practical answers. The inter-action between involvement - curriculum - teaching - involvement alone can keep theological education alive and relevant.

How can we involve if we are required to teach so many hours, complete the syllabus and conduct the exams within the given time and submit the marks? Certainly we need these requirements and discipline in any educational system. Experiences of some Roman Catholic and Protestant seminaries in India and Asia prove that teaching and involvement can go together in theological education. This demands careful planning in curriculum, time-table, academic calendar and requirement for the degree or diploma. Each student should have gained experience through involvement to the problems of industrial workers, agricultural community in villages, issues related to religions by visiting temples, mosques and shrines and involving in inter-religious dialogue and in the struggles against the violation of human rights. The involvement programmes for seminaries can be classified as follows.

i) Emergency Involvement. During the sudden spark of ethnic violence, violation of human rights of a community, death of rape victims or in police custody, etc. After verifying the fact and collecting reliable information, seminaries can organize protest march, hunger fast, satyagraha, bus or rail rokko, etc., to get justice. Or else students and staff can join the agitation organized by local Human Rights groups cancelling the classes for the day.

ii) Programmed Week-end Involvement - Either a particular class

or batch of students can be assigned to involve with the staff-in-charge of weekend programmes like jail ministry, environment protection, village adult education project, etc., throughout the academic year.

iii) Short Term Involvement - Sending a particular class to one term/semester internship in a different place to be associated with Rural/Urban Development Agencies, NGOs and Social Action Group and getting supervised by a team of faculty members.

iv) Long Term Involvement - Requiring a class to be involved for the entire year in a village or slum and helping the local community to get certain basic facilities such as electricity, water, ration card, *patta* for the land/house from the Government under the leadership of local people and with the guidance of the teachers staying with the students. Then our staff and students will understand the meaning of struggles against principalities and power.

v) Summer Vacation Involvement - Requiring the students to get involved in the programmes of their local church such as VBS, Evangelistic Team, Sunday School Teachers Association, Youth Fellowship, to observe the prevailing theological thinking and the radical change needed in these ministries and report to the seminars to modify the curriculum and training.

Evaluation of the performance of the students is so important. Many of us do not pay attention to this area in our teaching ministry. We think that our job is to correct the assignments and exam papers and submit the marks. Evaluation is not taking place at the end of the course but throughout the academic year. Since we evaluate the personal, theological and ministerial formation of a student, we have

to use various criteria in our evaluation. Evaluation is not to condemn but to build the student in faith, witness and action. The following methods can be used to evaluate and shape the student.

i) Regular Attendance - to the chapel service, classes, prayer meetings and to the programmes organized by the seminary. Sermons preached by students year after year should show their spiritual growth.

ii) Class Participation - to interact with the teacher and students expressing his/her own views and seeking genuine answers. Students should be given freedom and time to question, clarify and express the views during the class lectures. Teachers should not suppress their freedom or condemn them if they do not agree with their teaching.

iii) Assignments & Projects - to express critical analysis of the issues, relate the Scripture and bring out new interpretation out of class room teaching, extra reading of books and experience in the involvement. This should reveal the theological formation taking place in a student.

iv) Involvement and Contribution - Teachers can study the interest of students for involvement and commitment to the people with whom the students are involved. Some of them may take it as a requirement and participate for the sake of completing the requirement and others may take real interest and get challenged to work for the people. Their questions, difficulties, problems of the people, the Bible and Church give us a clue to the theological and ministerial formation taking place in them.

v) Final Examination - is needed to evaluate the progress of their study, comprehension, reflection and integration of theory and experience expressed through their answers and not

mere reproduction of the notes dictated in the class or text books used for the course.

vi) Annual Assessment - of students at the end of the academic year about their overall development and progress is necessary. This evaluation should not be done by one faculty but by the entire faculty members and staff-in-charge of the involvement programmes. Students can also be asked to fill in a "Self Evaluation" sheet to have assessment of their spirituality, studies and involvement. SSC and ATA can prepare and supply such evaluation sheets to colleges. Seminaries after giving enough opportunities, counseling and guidance for improvement can terminate students who are unfit for ministry.

Today, theological education is a costly affair. We cannot waste resources. We have to plan and work carefully to make the theological education relevant to our context by modifying periodically the curriculum, teaching method, involvement and evaluation procedure. A marked shift is needed in this new millennium to give importance and priority towards the training of the laity in taking up leadership in the churches as well as being effective witnesses in their own secular professions.

OBITUARY

Archbishop Alan de Lastic

It is with profound grief and sorrow that we have received the news of the untimely and tragic death of archbishop Alan de Lastic who died in a car crash in Poland. He was a true ecumenist and spearheaded the present protest campaign at the national and international level effectively and efficiently. In many ways the church in India has lost a prophet of our times who stood for certain values and ethics for the upliftment of the downtrodden and restoration of justice in India. Human rights was his passion. His diplomacy and his quiet mannerisms did not come in the way when he had to speak his mind boldly, to call a spade a spade. The ecumenical community and especially the Church of South India prays for God's blessings, guidance and comfort at this time of grief and sorrow. May his soul rest in peace.

"When We Search for God What We Get is *Vedas*; When God Searches for Us What We Get is the Gospel" Bishop Parmar at the CSI bishops' Retreat.

All the bishops spent some quiet time of reflection and introspection at Masanagudi which is about 23 kms. on the other side of Ootacamund at a place called Quiet Corner on 23rd and 24th of May 2000. Far from the madding crowd it was a quiet place ideally suited for meditation.

Leading the retreat on the subject "*Spirituality for our Times*" was the Rt. Rev. S.K. Parmar, the retired bishop of the Methodist Church of India and Chairman of the Timothy Project.

In his three talks spread over two days bishop Parmar said that once he prayed for the healing of the son of an elderly non-christian couple and when he got well the couples asked themselves who this God was. And to this non-christian couple Jesus

was christians' God. There were many political parties and organisations which were distributing all kinds of disinformation publications painting Jesus as a foreign God, a God of a particular group of people whose nationality and loyalty to the nation were suspect. Their objective appeared to be to create an impression that Indians had their own God who was Jesus; *Vedas* on the other hand was their scripture which was complete in itself and all Indians could find answers to all their problems in the *Vedas* which is a fountain head of age-old wisdom and knowledge. It is true, he said, that man's search for God resulted in *Vedas*, which is a compilation of profound philosophy. God's search for man on the other hand ends in the Gospel, the good news. Here man can see God revealing himself and it is this God's character to relate himself to man.

He reveals himself as a liberating God. Even though this revelation was for all mankind, it was only the people of Israel who rightly understood it. And God reveals himself as a God of all people who transcended all barriers. God was not the God of just one race or one tribe or of a particular time. He reveals himself as 'I AM' who embraces all people, all times and reveals himself as a liberating God. This God can not be pigeonholed. Whenever people are enslaved God

acts because he has created man in his own image and therefore he wants him to be free. He desires freedom from all kinds of slavery - social, religious, economic, political and cultural. He is a living God who sees and acts (Ex.3:7). He is the creator of all

(Jn.3:16). It's an inclusive ministry touching Jews, Samaritans, Romans, people of mixed race and people belonging to all regions and he works with all conditions of people rich and poor, religious and sinners, righteous and condemned, men and women,

healthy and sick, caste and out-caste. While he himself worked within the structure of a religion and society he was not bound by any of them. He was not bound by the law but he was above the law (Mat.5:17). He was greater than Moses (Jn.1:17). Solomon (Lk.11:31), Jonah (Lk.11:33) the Sabbath (Mat.12:8) and Abraham (Jn.8:53; 58) and he calls everyone to follow him and carry on his mission of liberation.



mankind (Gen.1). He is a universal God (Isa. 49:26). Liberating people is God's mission and when christians follow him, his mission becomes their mission.

His disciples are always asked to go out and act in order to free the enslaved people. This is what we see in the life of Abraham, Moses, Judges, Cyrus, Ahasurosh, Jona etc. It is to be noted that Moses turned aside to see what was happening at Mount Sinai and it was then that he heard God calling. When we are too busy we don't hear. Whenever God confronts man it becomes a holy place. Temples or churches need not necessarily be a holy place where man can hear God. Wherever God confronts man, becomes a holy place.

But at a point of time God's revelation which had been partial so far became full and complete and concrete in the person of Jesus Christ. Even though there is a point in saying that Muslims and christians are the people of the book it would be more correct to say of christians that they are a people of a person for they follow a person called Jesus, the Christ! He came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). He came to give abundant life (Jn. 10:10). He came to reveal God the father in full (Jn.5:17&19).

His ministry of redemption, salvation and healing encompasses all peoples

Karma theory expounds a bondage from which a man can not liberate himself. But Jesus through his gospel proclaims liberation from all kinds of bondage. Hence, his message is the good news for all mankind. The Church has to carry on this ministry of liberation among all people and in this process it may encounter opposition and persecution but it is up to the Church to decide either to follow him or to betray him.

Earlier the Most Rev. Dr. K.J. Samuel, Moderator-CSI welcomed all the participants and also led them in a time of prayer and supplication when almost everyone present there was invited to pray for a minute. Bishops S. Vasantha Kumar, M.I. Kesari, P.J.K. Balmi, Mahimai Rufus shared their experiences as bishops from various dioceses. A salient feature of this retreat was the participation of all the bishops' spouses, the directors of the various departments, the secretaries of Women's fellowship and the youth department.s.

The participants left Masanagudi fully refreshed and recharged for more effective witness and ministry into the world. The Moderator and the General Secretary were given a warm reception on 24th at Hotel Holiday Inn, Ooty, hosted by the Coimbatore diocese.

Inculcation of Christian Values in the Class Room

Ms.Ramani Dyasirvadam*

Introduction

Media offers opportunities and challenges. Media can entertain, educate and inform. It can also mislead the young and the gullible. Quite often we find it is the profit that determines the kind of programs that are dished out by the media and therefore there is certain value deterioration in all the branches of the media, viz., the press, the periodicals, pamphlets, journals, film magazines, films and television and now the Internet etc.

The media has created such havoc and disorder in the society. The worst affected are obviously the school and college students, because they are the most vulnerable sections of the society. Print and press have often sensationalised news and events in order to promote the sale of their papers and magazines without any concern for the adverse impact it creates on the tender minds of the young.

The adverse effects of the visual media namely films and television are all the more frightening! Visual media have created such unfortunate impact on the young. Many juvenile criminals have even admitted that they got their ideas from films and TV. Media glamorizes falsehood and wickedness and indirectly promote crime, adultery, burglary and corruption.

To the amazement of many the invention and extensive use of the computer screen has created a negative impact. It virtually flagged off what is called e-porn and cyber sex. It is said pornography is a huge and growing cyberspace draw. Web surfers spent almost \$ 1000 million on access to adult-content sites in 1999!! The pornographer's mastery of the online universe shouldn't be surprising. The industry has never passed up the chance to manipulate new media. The young

order their erotic needs, steamy videos, marital aids, latex corsets in the anonymity of cyberspace.

If this is the magnitude of the adverse effect of the media on the young, how to inculcate good cultural values and aesthetic principles in the class room? This is a challenging task. Under this panorama christian ethics and morals are to be tactfully inculcated, or otherwise the catastrophe is obvious.

In this context inculcating christian values is really a challenging task. Many a time christian parents/educators have been frustrated seeing their wards pick up their value systems from the films and TV while the pains they have taken to inculcate values in the class room appear to go in vain. Yet there can be no question of throwing up one's arms in despair and give up as that would only lead to disaster. We need to seek avenues and means of stemming the tide before irreparable damage is done. There are a few ways of doing this and we shall now see what they are.

Creating Media awareness

Since we live in an age where we have to live with the media the best thing we need to do is to create an awareness among both our students and parents about the positive as well as the negative aspects of the media. Many schools these days organize media awareness programs where children are taught to appreciate and critically assess what the media offer. They are taught to see that most of what they offer are in the realm of make-believe and not to be imitated in real life. Reel life is different from real life and any confusiton about this can only be disastrous. The parents are also made to realize that while it is still possible for the media to bring the world closer by bringing it into our drawing rooms, paradoxically it is also possible

for the same media to drive a wedge between family members and separate them by creating a communication barrier. They can be taught to realize that personal rapport and relationship can never be sacrificed except at one's own peril.

Modelling

'An ounce of action is worth tonnes of theory'. Values are best passed on by modelling rather than by speaking about them. Lived values carry greater weight than dream values. A preceptor who keeps singing the virtues of punctuality while he/she him/herself never keeps time for his/her class or appointments would never succeed in inculcating in the minds of students or wards the values of punctuality while a teacher who lives this value in his/her life will be more successful in passing on this value to the students. Most of our values are spoken values and not lived values. People are more likely to be influenced by what they see than what they hear. Children are never going to learn honesty or industry from a parent whom they see to be dishonest in his dealings and lazy in his work. Hence modelling assumes very great importance in value formation. The life of Jesus is a shining example of this modelling. What he preached he practised and hence his values had a great impact on the lives of his disciples.

Conclusion

Media by itself is amoral. It has no value of its own. But the way it is used can really determine whether it is going to be beneficial or detrimental. It is like a knife or fire which are amoral by themselves and the way they are used can determine the consequences. Hence our institutions have to learn to use these media effectively so that they can be best used for the good of the our children.

* Headmistress, St.Paul's Higher Secondary School, Kurnool.

MILLENIUM CELEBRATIONS AT THE DIOCESE OF EAST KERALA

The Most Rev.K.J.Samuel, Moderator, CSI

The diocese of East Kerala was born on 3rd April, 1983 after much hardship and trial. At the very outset, the priorities of the diocese were laid down as evangelisation, pastoral care and development. God has been leading the diocese so wonderfully in the past seventeen years inspite of financial difficulties and problems. The people not only pray but express their love for the church by giving though 99% of them are poor marginalised farmers and working for daily wages. The diocese has grown 31/2 times more in the past seventeen years with 15 to 20 new congregations being formed every year. The population of the diocese comprises of Tamil speaking people working in the tea gardens and in the high ranges, scheduled castes people, hill tribes and many sections of *Adivasi* groups. The church has been growing in faith, renewal, tithing and witness. It is our motto that every congregation in the diocese should become a missionary congregation through renewal meetings, bible rallies, fasting and all night prayers and through diocesan conventions for 8 days in the month of February. The diocese has been growing spiritually and in evangelism.

It is our earnest desire to celebrate the millennium 2000 in a fitting manner to declare our priorities and projects for the 3rd millennium.

A mass rally from all the parishes of the diocese with banners of every parish and pastorate, children, women and men, clergy, evangelists, church workers and all the people of the diocese marched through the streets with banners, placards with bible verses, flags with the CSI diocesan emblems and diocesan banners with drums and bugles, tablas and tableaux singing christian hymns and songs. Every parish in the diocese was involved in this rally.

The rally was held in the town of Thodupuzha on 29th of April 2000.

Dr.Tirlogan Singh, Vice Chairman of the National Minority Commission, New Delhi inaugurated the public meeting after the rally. Mr.John Joseph, member of the National Minority Commission addressed the rally. Mr.P.J.Joseph, Minister For Public Works and Housing gave the key of a completed house to a homeless person Mr.George through the help



of our diocesan youth movement. The Municipal Corporation of Thodupuzha gave us excellent cooperation and all the officials of the Police Department and TV and other media gave us very wide coverage. Representatives of all the religious groups and christian denominations were present to greet the rally and the millennium celebrations.

It was a christian witness in the predominantly Roman Catholic and Hindu majority town of Thodupuzha to see a vibrant Church of South India. The Moderator and Bishop of the diocese, presided at the Rally and Public Meeting. The Treasurer of the diocese, welcomed the gathering. For the Church of South India it was a great christian witness. It was a great occasion in the life of the diocese of East Kerala. During the public meeting the Moderator declared the following millennium projects :

1. construction of 2000 houses for the homeless in the next 5 years.
2. Overall development of the diocese with the cooperation of Government and other agencies.
3. Empowerment of youth by giving

training to be builders of the nation.

4. Empowerment of the girl child by identifying and giving them training in skills.

5. Empowerment of women.

6. Removal of illiteracy in the area.

7. Joining in the struggle of the *dalits, adivasis*.

8. Launching a computer academy and establishing network throughout the diocese.

9. Strengthening of the families and family life.

10. Strong campaigns against addiction and AIDS.

11. Launching self supportive projects.

12. Empowering church to be an agent of national reconciliation and communal harmony.

13. To make Henry Baker College a deemed university.

14. To upgrade ITC, Muttom into a technical college.

15. To establish an English Medium network.

16. Launch an environmental protection project.

17. To empower the VELCOM concept to equip the congregations.

18. To establish a hostel exclusively for *adivasis*.

19. To send 100 missionaries to different parts of India.

Appointed



Mr.John Pannirselvam has been appointed Deputy Secretary, CSITA from June 1, 2000. He succeeds Mr.McDonald. By education and academic training he is a mechanical engineer who had some stint abroad in Nigeria, Abu Dhabi and Dubai. He also served as Administrator in Krishna-Godavari diocese for a year before joining the synod. We congratulate him and wish him well in his new posting.

Karnataka Regional Sunday School Workers Conference

The Sunday School Movement has been rejuvenated in the CSI Churches of Karnataka State with the Karnataka Regional Sunday School Workers Conference which was held in R.L.T.C., Dharwad from 28-30, January 2000. The key persons who are incharge of this Sunday School Movement in three dioceses of Karnataka State have come together to discuss and prepare strategies for this Sunday School Movement in this conference. Nearly 60 leaders of Sunday School Movement have unanimously agreed to take up on warfoot basis the Sunday School missionary enterprise with the following strategies.

1. Study statistics preparation of existing Sunday Schools.
2. Regularising the Sunday School Workers at congregation, pastorate, area and at diocesan

levels.

3. Regularising the certificates for the trained Sunday School teachers.
4. Training young Sunday School teachers in each diocese in two phases over a period of two years.
5. Enrolling the Sunday School teachers to the Synod Sunday School Missionary Fund Programme.
6. Equipping Sunday School teachers with the Wings of Faith curriculum.
7. Multiplying the strength of Sunday Schools with children of all sections in congregations.
8. Satellite Sunday Schools in each congregation.
9. Adult Sunday Schools in every congregation.
10. Pastors and Sunday School Superintendents coordination.
11. Fund raising programme for diocesan Sunday School Department.

12. Awards and incentives for the Sunday School Teachers.

13. Peter Cator Scripture Examination and diocesan level scripture examination for each Sunday School.

14. Diocesan cell for research and evaluation on Christian Education Programmes.

The Rt.Rev.P.J.K.Balmi, the bishop emphasised the value of children's ministry in the context of changing social situations. The Rev.B.D.Prasada Rao, Director, CSI Synod Christian Education Department has motivated the diocesan representatives in building up their diocesan Departments of Christian Education. Rev.Dr.Hanny Cabral, Rev.Dr.George Kuruvilla were the resource persons.

Rev.J.Prabakar Rao, Treasurer of the Diocese, Mrs.Pushpamma, Mrs.Shantha Hebbal and Rev.J.M.Jogula, the Vice-President of the diocese coordinated the programme to the benefit of the participants. -B.D.Prasada Rao

PASTORS' PAGE

Karnataka Pastors Retreat and Exposure

While the Chennai temperature was raising to 40s, the pastors from Karnataka Northern diocese with Bishop Paul J.K.Balmi opted to have the retreat at the CSI Centre, Chennai. About 50 pastors took off from their pastorates from 28th to 30th May 2000 to retreat. The General Secretary of the Synod inaugurated the retreat while the Synod Departmental Directors facilitated the worship, bible study and theme presentations. Lively discussions were held on the life and ministry of the church.

The group was exposed to the life of Chennai through the city visit. The clergy in Karnataka Northern diocese got to know the structure and the functioning of the Synod and have established a good rapport with the Departments. They return back to the diocese with renewed visions of the minstry.

Consultation for Women in Ministry

A consultation for women and ministry was jointly organised by the Departments of Pastoral Aid, Diaconal Ministry and the Women's Fellowship at Vishranthi Nilayam, Bangalore from 7 - 9, June 2000. Each diocese was represented by an ordained lady presbyter, a theologically trained woman, a lay leader of Women's Fellowship and a Sister. About 75 participants took part in the consultation. The officers of ATTWI are also invited for the consultation. The Rt.Rev.S.Vasantha Kumar, Bishop in Central Karnataka diocese inaugurated the consultation in which Rev.Mrs.Nirmala Vasantha Kumar conducted the Bible studies, The Rt.Rev.Dr.George Isaac and The Rt.Rev.Dr.J.W.Gladstone presented the theme addresses. Mrs.Grace Srinivasan, Bishop Amma of Trichy-Tanjore diocese and Mrs.Joan Devasahayam, Bishop Amma of Madras diocese moderated the sessions. Dr.Richard

Devadoss, Mrs.Anne Rajkumar and Mrs.Sarah Karunakaran of the Diaconal Ministry challenged the women with their programme of the CSI campaign for the girl child. Rev.C.V.Theodore and Rev.Vinod Victor also shared their Departments' concerns with the women. The theme 'towards discovering creative participation of women in the life of the church' was analysed at length in the consultation which resulted resolutions inclusive language in the liturgy, gender sensitivity, equal opportunities for theological studies, uniform central of pay for men and women in church work, network to respond women issues, a directory of the centres of relief and care of the sisters in the sisters order.

The response and participation of women in the consultation give scope for more similar programmes in future.

Rev.G.Devakadasham
Director, PAD

Appointed



Sister Sarah Susheela, after long years of experience in Vishranthi Nilayam and United Theological college, Bangalore where she was a warden for sometime at the ERC has joined us as warden. She will also be Quality Supervisor of our newly opened canteen, warden of the working women's hostel and the guest house manager. We congratulate her and wish her well in her new posting.

Rev.Timothy Ravindar after serving a term at the synod secretariat as chaplain and guest house manager went back to join his diocese. The secretariat family bade him and his family farewell in May. His gift of singing, his leadership in organising services in the chapel, Hemalatha's ever smiling face and warm hospitality were very much appreciated. We wish him and his family many more years of fruitful service in his vineyard.



KERALA REGIONAL YOUTH ASSEMBLY

The Kerala Regional Youth Assembly was held at the Pastoral Orientation Centre, Ernakulam of the North Kerala diocese from 10th to 13th of May 2000. The Rt.Rev.Dr.George Isaac, Chairman of the Youth Department inaugurated the assembly calling upon the young people to be people of vision - prophetic, creative, practical and aesthetic. The key note address on the theme '*Cross - the continuing sign of Hope*' was delivered by Rev.Dr.Valson Thampu of St. Stephens College, Delhi. There was also a meaningful discussion on the Indian Christian Marriage Bill 2000 enabling the youngsters to understand

the intricacies of some of the clauses and provisions of the Bill. The Moderator, Most Rev.Dr.K.J. Samuel who addressed the Assembly exhorted the youth to have a divine pride of being members of the Church of South India. He enumerated the goals and visions he has for the Church and called upon the young people to be a movement of justice and truth. Rev.Vinod Victor, Secretary, suggested the various possibilities of strengthening the local congregational youth units and the manifold possibilities of networking. 120 young people from the four dioceses of Kerala enthusiastically participated in the assembly which is being held for the 15th year in a row. Mr.Jerry, the convener and the youth of North Kerala deserve appreciation for the wonderful hosting of the programme.

The assembly strongly voiced its

concern over the provisions of the proposed Indian Christian Marriage Bill 2000 which was clearly viewed as an infringement into the personal laws of the minority communities. Taking exception to the fact that marriage and divorce are clubbed together, the concern of making divorce procedure simple and easy was taken a serious view of. They identified the hidden agenda behind the penal clauses in the bill - first time ever in something related to the personal law and called upon the church leadership to initiate in depth studies into the larger implications of the bill before giving its final nod. A resolution was also passed voicing serious concerns over the atrocities on the minorities calling upon the government to act swiftly to protect the affected people in order to instill a sense of security among them.



MILLENNIUM YOUTH FESTIVAL - RAYALASEEMA

The millennium youth festival of the diocese of Rayalaseema was held at the Holy Trinity Church campus, Ananthapur from 2nd to 4th of June 2000. The theme of the conference was 'Holistic renewal of the Church - the role of youth based on the biblical text, 'Come let us rebuild the walls of Jerusalem'(Neh.2:17). The Rt.Rev.C.B.M. Frederick, bishop of the diocese inaugurated the conference. The resource persons included Rev.Dr.R.Yesuratnam, Rev.Dr.B.C.Paul, Mr.Jenny Christopher, Mrs.Ramani Dyvasirvadam, Dr.Grace Nirmala and Rev. and Mrs.Vinod Victor. About 400 young people from the various churches of the diocese along with young people from the various churches of the diocese along with young pastors participated in this rejuvenating programme which is now to be an annual event in the diocese. Rev.P.D.S.J.Benhur, Diocesan Youth Director and his team along with the members of the congregation of Holy Trinity Church deserve special appreciation for the meaningful conduct of the programme.



It's Closer than you think!

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Dates : 2 - 5, November 2000

**Venue : Shanthi Nilayam Agricultural Institute,
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